



Office of Management's Monthly Newsletter

The Beacon

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Food Safety and Inspection Service
Office of Management
Ronald Hicks, Deputy Administrator

September 2000
Volume 4, Number 4
web: www.fsis.usda.gov/om/adserv.htm
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bea- con (bê' ken) *noun*

A signaling or guiding device, such as a lighthouse, located on a coast. A source of guidance or

RON'S CORNER

Feature Article

by Ron Hicks, Deputy Administrator
Office of Management

FSIS and other government agencies annually promote food safety awareness during the month of September. In the following article, Gertie Hurley of the Food Safety Education Staff outlines some important tips for everyone who consumes meat, poultry, or egg products.

National Food Safety Education Month 2000

"Be Smart. Keep Foods Apart -- Don't Cross-Contaminate."

by Gertie Hurley
Food Safety Education Staff
Telephone: 202-720-4138

September is National Food Safety Education Month (NFSEM), an annual observance to focus attention on the importance of safe food handling and preparation in both home and commercial kitchens. Created by the foodservice industry in 1995, NFSEM is widely supported by federal, state, and local government agencies, the food industry, and consumer organizations. "Be Smart. Keep Foods Apart -- Don't Cross-Contaminate" is this year's theme for NFSEM. Cross-contamination is the transfer of harmful bacteria to food from other foods, cutting boards, utensils, etc., if they are not

handled properly. An example of cross-contamination is cutting raw meat, poultry, or fish on a cutting board and then slicing salad vegetables on the same cutting board without washing the cutting board between uses.

Most consumers have developed a good foundation of food safety knowledge. Yet there is still consumer confusion about cross-contamination. This confusion results in increasing the risk of foodborne illness. According to a 1998 FSIS/FDA consumer food survey:

- Twenty-one percent of main meal cooks do not wash their cutting boards after cutting raw meat;
- One quarter of main meal cooks do not wash their hands after handling raw meat and fish; two-thirds do not wash their hands after handling raw eggs; and
- Sixty-one percent of people who use a cloth or sponge to wipe kitchen counters change them less than seven times per week. Food safety experts advise using paper towels to wipe kitchen surfaces. If cloths or sponges are used, wash them often in the hot cycle of your washing machine.

Here are some helpful tips for preventing cross-contamination:

- Always wash hands with hot, soapy water after handling raw

meat, poultry, seafood, eggs, or fresh fruits and vegetables;

- Wash cutting boards, dishes, and utensils with hot, soapy water after they come in contact with raw meat, poultry, seafood, eggs, or fresh fruits and vegetables;
- Keep raw meat, poultry, seafood, as well as eggs -- and the juices from raw foods -- away from other foods in your shopping cart, on kitchen counters, and in your refrigerator;
- If possible, use one cutting board for fresh produce and a different one for raw meat, poultry, and seafood;
- Never place cooked food back on the same plate or cutting board that previously held raw food without washing the plate or cutting board between uses;
- Don't use sauce that was used to marinate raw meat, poultry, or seafood on cooked food unless you boil the sauce first.

If you would like materials to use with presentations or to share with educators or health professionals in

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your life, please contact me, NFSEM Coordinator, with the Food Safety Education Staff at 202-720-4138 or the email address: fsis.outreach@usda.gov

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Something For Your Wallet

Kathy Welsh

Labor and Employee Relations Division

Telephone: 202-720-5657

It's not money, but it may keep you from harm. The wallet card printed in Attachment 1 to this edition of the *Beacon* has workplace violence prevention information on both sides. One side gives a guide for defusing an incident. The other side gives telephone numbers to call to report an incident. The Agency numbers do not take the place of 911. Always call 911 in case of an emergency.

A reminder...workplace violence incidents can occur when least expected. Please refer to the FSIS orange and white brochure, "Preventing Workplace Violence." Every employee should have one. If you need a copy, call 202-720-5657.

WORKFORCE OF THE FUTURE

Van Blargan to Focus on Future Enforcement, Role of Compliance Officers

by Yvonne Davis, Chair, Workforce of the Future Steering Committee
Telephone: 202-720-4827

I want to share some good news with all of those who are interested in the future role of the FSIS Compliance Officer. Effective August 2, Administrator Tom Billy assigned Richard T. Van Blargan to devote his full attention to developing organizational and management proposals for FSIS enforcement programs. In his July

31 memo, Billy said that this assignment includes:

1. articulating recommended options for accomplishing our responsibilities to use our administrative, civil, and criminal authorities in an efficient and effective manner;
2. completing the goals established for the Future Roles and Responsibilities of Compliance Officers as part of our Workforce of the Future planning;
3. resolving the resource and jurisdiction issues remaining related to practices and recommendations of the office of the Inspector General; and
4. participating with other units of FSIS in addressing employee safety concerns.

The Administrator also stated, "I consider this assignment to be a top priority for the Agency and know that you will bring to it your wealth of knowledge and vision for the future. Dr. Mina and Ms. Seymour fully support this action and will assure that all of us work to avoid distracting you from completing your mission."

Carol Seymour, Assistant Deputy Administrator for District Enforcement Operations, echoed this theme when she advised the enforcement community of Van Blargan's new assignment, sharing Billy's letter: "This letter followed recommendations from Mark Mina and me. We feel, and Mr. Billy concurs, that the important planning for the future of enforcement simply won't get done without full time attention and direction." Seymour also noted, "I know it will be difficult to resist the temptation to tap Richard's knowledge and expertise that have been so readily available to us in the past to deal with day to day operational matters. But I ask that you help me give him the time

he needs to complete his assignments."

I have advised Richard Van Blargan, already a member of the WOFSC, that the resources of the Workforce of the Future Steering Committee are available to help him in his new assignment. At our September 26-28 meeting, one of the things the Steering Committee will address is how to go about providing that support.

Another change in our agency is the recent reassignment of Christine Sinclair from the Human Resources Division to the Workforce of the Future Steering Committee. Chris' move to our staff is another example of how we are making full use of our resources and providing employees the opportunity to make contributions in other places in the agency. We have already taken advantage of the skills and experience Chris brings in the areas of strategic planning, change and transition, facilitation, public speaking, and professional effectiveness coaching. Chris' new number is 202-720-3845.

VDIP

Power

by Kathy Welsh

Telephone: 202-720-5657

Milo Christianson

Telephone: 612-370-2000

Labor and Employee Relations Division

Occasionally, callers to our Voluntary Dispute Intervention Program (VDIP) line raise concerns about how a mediator levels the playing field during a mediation session. In other words, how does a mediator balance power when a subordinate and supervisor have a conflict over an issue?

Fortunately, mediation by its very nature tends to balance power between disputants. A mediator's first responsibility, in fact, is to

ensure that the parties involved in mediation are treated as equals. The mediator does this when greeting, addressing and even seating the participants. For example, whenever possible a mediator tries to have a meditation at a round table, so that no one is sitting at the head of the table. In addition, the mediator treats each party with dignity by listening carefully to each one and showing equal interest in what each says.

The mediator also accepts the competence of each party to explore options and raise any underlying issues that might have led to the conflict. Such an approach enables the parties to arrive at solutions that transcend those achieved through the sheer use of power. Finally, a mediator affirms the parties by assuming they are competent to resolve their own disputes. This empowers them to move ahead toward solutions, since the parties involved in the conflict are the decision-makers at the mediation. The mediator simply facilitates the process.

Long standing patterns of dominance, competition and even dependence often get played out in a mediation session. Frequently, inequalities of power take the form of lack of information, since information can be a very potent source of power. That is why the mediator ensures that all of the parties have the same information relating to the dispute.

Supervisor/employee relationships do not simply disappear once the parties enter the mediation room. Therefore, mediators must take steps to assure equality of relevant information, monitor the use of power, and assure assertive deliberations by all of the parties involved.

Source: Training Manual for Basic Mediation Skills and Process, Susan Shearouse and Ervin Mast, Northern Virginia Mediation Service.

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

Wellness Training Program Workbooks

by Tom Wright

Administrative Services Division

Telephone: 301- 504-4246

A distribution of the Employee Wellness CD was made to FAIM users in 1999. The CD contains information, strategies, and tools to help FSIS employees prevent and cope with the effects of psychological and physical stress on the body. The CD is based on the training program that was developed by Texas A&M University for FSIS in the early 1990's. Wellness Training Program workbooks that can be used in conjunction with the CD are available from the Human Resources Development Staff. You can receive a copy by sending your name and complete mailing address to any of the following:

E-Mail: CEDL@usda.gov

Fax: 979-260-9579

Mail:
CEDL
USDA, FSIS, OFO, HRDS
S. Suite 1600
2700 Earl Rudder Fwy,
College Station, TX 77845-5015

Audiometric Testing—First Step

In accordance with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's Hearing Conservation Program standard, employees are entitled to an annual audiogram at no cost if they are exposed to noise at or above an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 decibels. Many FSIS inspection workplaces meet or exceed these criteria. Current noise monitoring results should be posted in the USDA office. FSIS is upgrading its audiometric testing program by making testing readily available to all personnel whose exposures meet or exceed the 85

decibels criteria. A comparison of the annual audiogram with the baseline audiogram should indicate whether the FSIS hearing conservation program is preventing hearing loss.

To assist supervisors and inspectors-in-charge in providing audiograms to their employees, we are compiling a listing of audiometric testing providers nationwide. If you have used or are aware of an audiometric testing provider, please e-mail or mail me the name of the provider, address, telephone number and the costs per test. Audiometric test requirements must comply with 29 CFR 1910.95, Occupational Noise Exposure. My address is as follows:

Tom Wright
Safety and Occupational Health
Manager
USDA, FSIS, OM, ASD, EHSB
5601 Sunnyside Ave—Mail Drop
5250
Beltsville, MD 20705-5250

Help Wanted

We need your help. FSIS depends on the information entered on the Form CA-1 and Form CA-2 to compile its injury/illness database. This system is a useful tool to identify trends, and to develop programs to prevent injuries and illnesses. Approximately 20 percent of these forms are coded incorrectly. This involves the type and source codes. Type code—999 and Source Code—9999 are defined as "Unclassified or Insufficient Data." These codes should be use only on rare occasions. A database that identifies approximately one fifth of the incidents as "unknown" is not very useful.

An example of a correctly coded form for an employee who cuts his or her left thumb with a knife is:

Type: 420 Cut by
Source: 0320 Hand Tool (Non-powered)

For more information on the coding, please refer to FSIS Directive 4791.13, Workplace Inspections, and Injury, Illness and Motor Vehicle Incident Reporting.

Occupational Safety and Health Responsibilities

We often hear the term "responsibility" thrown around when we discuss occupational safety and health. Supervisors and employees have safety and health responsibilities. These responsibilities can be found in the following documents:

29 CFR 1960.9 and 1960.10

Chapter 1, Section 6 of the USDA Safety and Health Manual

Article XIII of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between FSIS and the National Joint Council of Food Inspection Locals

FSIS Directive 4791.1, Basic Safety and Health Program including the FSIS Occupational Safety and Health Poster

Supervisor's responsibilities:

To the extent of their authority, furnish employees employment and a place of employment which are free from recognized hazards that are causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm.

They should also comply with the occupational safety and health standards applicable to their agency and with all rules, regulations, and orders issued by the head of the agency with respect to the agency occupational safety and health program.

They should ensure that employees receive adequate training and experience as required to enable them to recognize hazards in their workplace.

They should use adequate procedures to prevent injuries, illnesses, or loss of property.

They should be trained to recognize and address illegal drug use by employees.

Initiate procedures for a reasonable suspicion test after first making appropriate factual observations, documenting those observations, and obtaining appropriate concurrence.

Refer employees to the Employee Counseling Services Program and rehabilitation upon finding illegal drug use.

Initiate appropriate disciplinary action upon receiving a finding of illegal drug use by a subordinate.

Employee's responsibilities:

Each employee shall comply with the standards, rules, regulations, and orders imposed by his/her agency in accordance with section 19 of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, Executive Order 12196 and 29 CFR 1960 which are applicable his/her own actions and conduct.

Shall use safety equipment, personnel protective equipment, and other devices and procedures provided or directed by the agency and necessary for their protection.

(In future articles, we will cover employee "rights" and FSIS "responsibilities.")

Notebook Computer Cart/Carrier

by Tim Dial

Administrative Services Division
Telephone: 630-620-7474, x-228

Q: I have back problems and have to carry my notebook computer between assignments including up and down stairs. Is there a carrier or cart available to make this task a little easier?

A: Yes! If you are a FAIM computer user and have back or other medical conditions that make carrying your notebook computer difficult, you may request a fold-up luggage-type carrier with wheels from FAIM. Please submit your request with an explanation as to why you need a carrier to FAIMHELP. FAIMHELP may be reached by phone at 1-800-473-9135, by fax at 1-888-288-5213, or by sending e-mail to the FAIMHELP mailbox.

As a former processing inspector on patrol assignments, a better way to carry our notebook computers to due to back pain was the subject of numerous conversations with co-workers. As the newest field safety and health specialist, I am glad I was able to research this issue and provide you with this information.

Multi-District Safety Poster Contest

by G. Ray Kobaly

Administrative Service Division
Telephone: 404-562-5961

During the Multi-District Safety and Health Committee meeting for the districts of Atlanta, Jackson, and Raleigh conducted on July 12-13, 2000 in Jackson, MS, the Multi-District Safety Poster Contest was held and judged. Members of the Multi-District Safety and Health Committee judged the posters submitted by the employees of the three districts. After reviewing all of the posters submitted, the committee members selected one winner from each District to receive an eight-hour time-off award and certificate.

Winners from the Safety Poster Contest are:

Andres Ortiz - Atlanta District
Michael Pittman - Jackson District
Sylvia Miller - Raleigh District

All other entries in the Safety Poster Contest, for their time and effort will receive a Certificate of Appreciation and a USDA, FSIS, Padfolio - Multi-Functional

Organizer. The winning posters are published in Attachment 2 to this issue of the *Beacon*.

SUPPLIES

Field Supply System Update

by Pete Bridgeman

Administrative Services Division

Telephone: 301-504-4222

Unit of Issue Change - FSIS-EPI-009 - Egg Product Sample Seals -

The unit of issue for this item has been changed from "Each" to "HD" (package of 100). Please make a note of this in your Egg Products Items Addendum, (FSIS-CAT-002)

Green Nitrile Gloves - We recently got a shipment of green nitrile gloves (FSIS-51-XX) into Landover that were from a different manufacturer than the gloves we normally stock. Although these gloves were supposed to be identical to the ones we normally stock, we have received a number of complaints from inspectors about these gloves. The most common complaint is about the sizing. These tend to be a size smaller than the previous gloves. We will be correcting this problem and should have a supply of the type of nitrile gloves you have grown accustomed to by the end of September.

Move of the Field Supply Center -

The building of the new warehouse in Beltsville is progressing on schedule, and we are still expecting to have the Field Supply System up and running in the new location by the end of November of this year. Until that time, orders will continue to be filled at the Landover Service Center. Notification of the move and the new address will go out with appropriate lead-time prior to the actual move. An updated catalog will also be published in conjunction with the move. We will also provide an electronic version of the catalog to FAIM, to be included in the next FAIM CD release.

Electronic Ordering Update - We have submitted draft procedures for electronic ordering to the National Joint Council of Food Inspection Locals (NJC), the National Association of Federal Veterinarians (NAFV) and the Association of Technical and Supervisory Personnel (ATSP), for review and comment, and have received comments back from the NJC and responded to their comments. The District Offices and several other field offices have been able to order electronically via the web page for a couple of months now, and we are in the process of fine-tuning this capability and working out the final bugs in the process. This capability should be ready for field use by November at the latest. We will notify the employee organizations of the final timelines and allow for any additional comments at that time. This will be a voluntary alternative to the standard method of ordering, but one we think you will find much more convenient and timely.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Transit Benefits Are Here!!

By now you have heard the good news! Under the provisions of Executive Order 13150, Federal Workforce Transportation, and other laws governing transit benefits (the Energy Policy Conservation Act, the Federal Employees Clean Air Act, and the Transportation Equity Act), FSIS will be providing a transit subsidy to all eligible employees to help them pay their commuting costs between their home and their workplace.

The Transit Benefit Program for employees will be implemented beginning in October of this year. Under this program, a transit subsidy, in an amount equal to the employee's commuting costs, up to a maximum of \$65.00 per month, will be allocated to purchase transit passes or vanpool vouchers for each eligible employee who uses

mass transportation or vanpool to commute from their residence to work. The \$65 maximum amount is fixed by law, but is slated to increase to \$100 a month in Calendar Year 2002.

Recently, USDA entered into an Interagency Agreement with the Department of Transportation (DOT) to administer the Transit Benefit program in October for all eligible USDA employees. FSIS, along with some other USDA agencies, will be contracting with DOT to purchase transit passes or vanpool vouchers from local transit authorities in Washington, DC and across the country and to distribute them to all eligible employees who take a form of mass transportation or a vanpool to get to work.

Forms of mass transportation are considered to be subway, train, ferry, bus or other authorized commuter highway vehicle. A commuter highway vehicle is any highway vehicle (vanpool) with a seating capacity of 6 adults *not including the driver*. At least 80% of the mileage must be for the purpose of transporting persons to and from work and the number of passengers on each daily commuting trip must be at least 1/2 of the capacity of the vehicle.

For employees who commute to their work location using mass transportation or vanpool, this means they will have their commuting costs paid for by the Agency to a maximum of \$65 a month or \$780 a year. This benefit will be *in addition* to salary and is tax-free for the most part. That is, no Federal income tax or payroll taxes are deducted from this benefit. Depending on the state in which you live, the transit subsidy benefit may also be free of state tax.

Most of you have probably already seen the USDA application form sent to all field and HQ offices. We have attached a copy to this month's *Beacon* (See Attachment

3). Employees may apply anytime they become eligible for the Transit Benefit. (You are eligible if you take a form of mass transit or vanpool to work, and your vanpool meets the criteria mentioned above.)

Completed applications are sent first to the Human Resources Division, then through the Department to DOT. DOT will purchase the appropriate fare media (subway passes, bus passes or tokens, rail tickets, bus tokens, vanpool vouchers, etc.) that employees indicate in their applications from the many local transit authorities throughout the country. Once the fare media is purchased, DOT will distribute it to employees on a quarterly basis. The distribution to HQ employees will be done at central USDA locations in the Washington area. For field employees, the fare media will be distributed to Transit Coordinators in field offices for further distribution to employees. Employees will be asked to sign for the receipt of their fare media.

Employees should submit a new application whenever their commuting arrangements change (e.g., if you were riding in a carpool at the time your application was first distributed and you weren't eligible, but now you ride a vanpool, you should submit an application.) If you haven't submitted an application for transit benefits and you would like to submit one, please contact your local field office for assistance or Michele Clarke, the FSIS Transit Benefit Coordinator in the Performance, Evaluation and Recognition Branch (PERB). Michele can be reached on 202-720-7983, via e-mail on Outlook or via the Internet to Michele.Clarke@USDA.gov. Completed applications should be submitted to Michele in Room 3817 South Building, 14th & Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-3700

Long-Term Care Insurance—A Good Idea for Employees caught in the "Sandwich Generation"

H.R. 4040 recently passed both houses of Congress and President Clinton is expected to sign it soon. This Act will allow federal employees to purchase long-term care insurance at a discounted group rate under a system that would likely be administered by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) in a similar manner to the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program. OPM will screen insurance providers and make sure that employees and retirees receive the necessary information on insurance options and benefits.

This Act is a much-needed benefit for many federal employees and retirees. With an average age of 46 - much higher than the average age of the typical private sector employee - many federal employees are victims of the so-called "Sandwich Generation." That means many of us are still raising our own kids while beginning to assume at least some responsibility for the care of our elderly parents.

The costs to provide elder care are becoming an enormous amount, as anyone who has been forced to look into this issue can tell you. Caregivers brought into the home on a relatively full-time basis can cost about \$3000 per month, and the cost of nursing home care for elderly parents who cannot be cared for in the home can cost as much as \$5000-6000 per month. Medicaid (not Medicare) will pick up some of these nursing home costs, but usually only after the individual's private finances are sometimes drastically reduced or exhausted.

That's why long-term care insurance is becoming an important benefit to those of us

in the 35-65 age group. When families are experiencing situations such as providing assistance to one parent who might need to put the other parent in a nursing home because of his advanced Parkinson's disease, dementia, Alzheimers or other illness, it can be an emotionally trying experience. The last thing a family wants at this point in time is the financial worry of how the bills are going to be paid. That's why some type of long-term care insurance is important. Even a very good government pension, as some of our elders have or we will have in the future, is not going to cover the full cost of nursing home care.

We all realize no long-term insurance policy is going to cover all long-term care expenses, but it is a good start. And the younger you are when you first sign up for LTC insurance, the cheaper the premiums. Keep watching for information. Once the bill is signed by the President and OPM makes it available, you will want to learn more about it. OPM Director Janice LaChance was quoted as saying: "Passage of this legislation means that the long-term care needs of millions of current and retired federal employees and members of the military, as well as eligible family members, will be given the financial security they deserve." Stay tuned for more information on this important subject.

July/August Retirements

Paul E. Baher, Consmr Safety Insp, OFO, New Holland, PA, 07/29/00, 18 Years

Herbert L. Burns, FI, OFO, Mobile, AL, 08/12/00, 24 Years

Santiago G. Castillo, Jr., FI, OFO, San Antonio, TX 07/31/00, 38 Years

Albert D. Dennis, Consmr Safety Insp, OFO, Salt Lake City, UT, 35 Years

John T. Dimmit, Consmr Safety Insp, OFO, Rogers, AR, 07/28/00, 16 Years

Lora M. Elliott, FI, OFO, Danville, AR, 08/12/00, 17 Years
Fawzi I. El-Sayed, SVMO, OFO, Fresno, CA, 07/29/00, 25 Years
Peter C. Hollander, Office Auto Clerk, OFO, Albany, NY, 08/12/00, 14 Years
Robert J. Hreha, Consmr Safety Insp, OFO, Manor, PA, 07/28/00, 34 Years
Dorothy I. Huey, FI, OFO, Campbell, MO, 07/29/00, 24 Years
Gordon R. Jones, FI, OFO, Chattanooga, TN, 08/12/00, 6 Years
Nola M. Miller, FI, OFO, Grand Island, NE, 08/12/00, 9 Years
Carolyn Morrow, FI, OFO, Moselle, MS, 07/29/00, 9 Years
James M. Pace, FI, OFO, Marshalltown, IA, 07/29/00, 30 Years
Bernard D. Pausch, Consmr Safety Insp, OFO, Wayne, OH, 07/29/00, 36 Years
Larry S. Prentice, FI, OFO, Green Forest, AR, 07/15/00, 27 Years
Jack P. Pritt, Consmr Safety Insp, OFO, Columbus, OH, 07/29/00, 28 Years
William B. Short, FI, OFO, Selma, CA, 07/29/00, 24 Years
Charlie C. Story, Consmr Safety Insp, OFO, Carrollton, GA, 07/29/00, 26 Years
James R. Walcott, VMO, OFO, Washington, DC, 07/29/00, 23 Years
Floyd R. Wold, FI, OFO, Sioux Falls, SD, 07/01/00, 26 Years
Amelia L. Wright, Management Analyst, OM, Washington, DC, 07/01/00, 21 Years
Annette Yarhouse, Prog Anal, OPPDE, Washington, DC, 07/29/00, 26 Years

Leave Transfer Recipients

1. Jackie Copeland
OFO, DC; Illness
2. Annie Stewart
POB, MN; Serious Illness
3. Linda Cole
OPPDE, DC; Serious Illness
4. Stephanie Showell
OFO, DE; Family Illness
5. Linda Carey
EMS, DC; Surgery
6. George Olson
OFO, MN; Family Illness
7. Marilyn Weber
FPC, IA; Illness
8. Robert Martz
OFO, IA; Serious Illness
9. Betty Morgan
OFO, AR; Family Illness
10. Carolyn Woolfolk
OFO, DC; Surgery
11. OFO-99-0027
OFO, NC; Surgery
12. Tammy Love
OFO, AR; Surgery
13. Sue Engels
OFO, IA; Family Illness
14. Aurbrey Tribble
OFO, FL; Serious Illness
15. Jacqueline Bonner
OFO, AL; Surgery
16. John French
OFO, GA; Family Illness
17. Victor Varnadoe
OFO, OH; Family Illness
18. Tommie Olson
OFO, NE; Surgery
19. Clement Grangier
OFO, MD; Serious Illness
20. OFO-99-0047
OFO, IA; Surgery
21. Mark Spear
OFO, AL; Surgery
22. Dunita Harris
OFO, TX; Maternity
23. James Layman
OFO, OH; Serious Illness
24. Karen Wesson
OFO, DC; Surgery
25. Brandy Blevins
OFO, CA; Serious Illness
26. Vandora Hampton
OFO, VA; Serious Illness
27. OFO-00-0006
OFO, AL; Illness
28. Madge Stone
OFO, DC; Family Illness
29. Carmen Torrent
FSE, DC; Illness
30. OFO-00-0007
OFO, AL; Surgery
31. Jamie Zysset
FO, KS; Maternity
32. OFO-00-0010
OFO, GA
33. Gordon Jones
OFO, TN; Serious Illness
34. Randy Haggard
OFO, TX; Serious illness
35. Vickie Allen
OFO, CA, Serious Illness
36. OFO-AL-0013
OFO, AL, Serious Illness
37. John Buscemi
OM, DC; Surgery
38. Andy Sandoval
OFO, TX; Serious Illness
39. Robert Butler
OFO, MS; Surgery
40. Ralph Bowen
OFO, NE; Serious Illness
41. Deana Hall
OFO, AR; Maternity49.
42. Frankie Beacorn
FO-OO-0020
43. Judith Terry
OFO, AL; Serious Illness
44. OFO-00-0022
OFO, MI; Serious Illness
45. Earnestine Smitherman
OFO, TX; Surgery
46. Chang Choi
OFO, IL; Surgery
47. Cynthia Sherman
OFO, DC; Serious Illness
48. Thomas Gorka
OFO, IL; Serious Illness
49. Eusebio Galindo
OFO, TX; Serious Illness
50. Denise Barnes
OFO, DC; Surgery
51. Luan Hamar
OFO, CA; Surgery
52. Ruth Catlett
OFO, AR; Serious Illness
53. Iris Sissell
OFO, MO; Surgery
54. Becky Schneider
OFO, CO; Illness
55. OFO-00-0030
OFO, WV; Surgery
56. Nancy Clyburn
OPHS-DC-Surgery

*While not consenting to the publication of their names, certain LTP recipients are assigned a number that they may provide to their co-workers if they choose so that donated leave may be transferred to their account. Any questions on the LTP should be referred to the Human Resources Field Office on 1-800-370-3747 for field employees and to the Classification and Compensation Branch for HQ employees on 202-720-6287.

ISSUANCES**Recent Agency Issuances**

by Corinne Calhoun
Administrative Services Division
Telephone: 301-504-4233

The following notices and directive have been issued since the August 2000 edition of the *Beacon*. Many recent issuances are available in an electronic format from the "PCDIALS" library in Opendesk and from the "Agency Issuances" public folder in the Exchange mail system (Outlook).

Notice 25-00 (7/24/00)
Fiscal Year 2001 Pay Periods and Official Payday Dates

Notice 26-00 (7/24/00)
Change in Billing Rates for Egg Product Inspection

Notice 27-00 (8/14/00)

Revised Shuttle Service Schedule – South Building, West-End Court, and L Street

Notice 28-00 (8/14/00)
Awards Granted to Food Inspectors for 1999

Notice 29-00 (8/14/00)
Awards Granted to Food Inspectors for 1999 (Raleigh District)

Notice 30-00 (8/15/00)
Protecting Records and Nonrecords

Notice 31-00 (8/15/00)
Reporting Fiscal Year 2000 Yearend Transactions

Directive 3800.1, Revision 2, Amendment 11 (8/14/00)
Temporary Duty Travel Within CONUS

Directives and notices are distributed automatically to applicable Agency employees and

offices. Additional copies are available from:

USDA FSIS ASD P&DS
MAILDROP 5241
5601 SUNNYSIDE AVENUE
BELTSVILLE MD 20705-5241

Telephone: 301-504-4242
Fax: 301-504-4277

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The current and past editions of *The Beacon* are available electronically in the "Newsletters" public folder on the Exchange (Outlook) mail system as well as on the FSIS Website at: www.fsis.usda.gov/om/adserv.htm

ATTACHMENT 1

Workplace Violence Information Wallet Card**VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE**

A GUIDE FOR DEFUSING A WORKPLACE VIOLENCE SITUATION

- Speak calmly and listen
- If you are not the target of a threat, reassure the person that you mean them no harm
- Express no judgments
- Try to stay a safe distance away from harm
- Keep an escape route in mind
- Call for assistance as soon as possible
- Stay alert; never let your guard down
- Use caution at all times

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE EMERGENCY:

- Call 911
- Supervisor: _____
- FSIS Assessment Team: 1-888-894-6217 (24 hours)

ASSISTANCE:

Employee Assistance Program 1-800-523-5668
1-800-882-7610 (TDD)
Voluntary Dispute Intervention Program 1-800-860-8347

ATTACHMENT 2



Andres Ortiz
Atlanta District

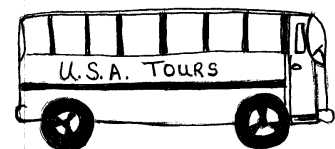
Michael Pittman
Jackson District

Sylvia Miller
Raleigh District

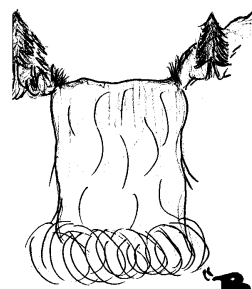
**LET THESE BE THE ONLY
SLIPS**



TRIPS

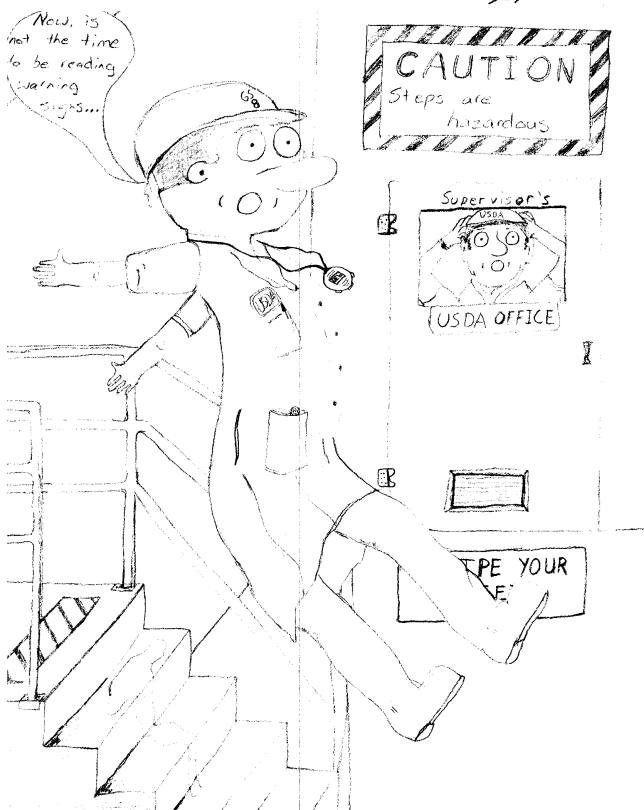


AND FALLS



**you ARE
EVER
ASSOCIATED
WITH!**

"BE SAFE"



ATTACHMENT 3

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION BENEFIT PROGRAM APPLICATION**

USDA Organization (Provide Mission Area and Agency): _____

Check here if you are applying for: ____agency paid transit benefit

Are you currently receiving an agency paid transit benefit? ____Yes ____No

A. Applicant Information (Please Print or Type):

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ MI: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Work Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Work Telephone Number: _____ Last 4 digits of your SSN: _____

Prior to applying for this benefit, did you drive to work or use some form of mass transit?:

B. Modes of Transportation to be used to and from workplace:

Please provide the name of the transit company/system that you use in the space below:

Bus _____ Light Rail _____ Subway _____ Train _____

Ferry _____ Authorized *Commuter Highway Vehicle _____

Other (explain) _____

*Any highway vehicle with a seating capacity of at least 6 adults (not including the driver). At least 80 percent of the total mileage use of this vehicle can reasonably be expected to be for the purposes of transporting persons in connection with travel between their residences and their place of employment. During these trips passengers will number at least 8 of the adult seating capacity (not including the driver).

Please provide the specific type of faremedia you use (e.g. ticket, pass, token, etc.): _____.

C. Employee Certification:

WARNING: This certification concerns a matter with the jurisdiction of an agency of the United States and making a false, fictitious, or fraudulent certification may render the maker subject to criminal prosecution under title 18, United States Code, Section 1001, Civil Penalty Action, providing for administrative recoveries of up to \$10,000 per violation, and/or agency disciplinary actions up to and including dismissal.

I certify that I am employed by the Department of Agriculture.

I certify that I am eligible for a public transportation fare benefit, will use it for my daily commute to and from work, and will not give, sell, or transfer it to anyone else.

I certify that the monthly transit benefit I am receiving does not exceed my monthly commuting costs.

I certify that in any given month, I will not use the Government-provided transit benefit in excess of the statutory limit. If my commuting costs per month on public transit exceed the monthly statutory limit, then I will supplement those additional costs with my own funds rather than use a Government-provided transit benefit designated for use in a future month.

I certify that my usual monthly commuting costs are: \$_____

Employee Signature:_____Date:_____

D. Transit Subsidy Coordinator:

Name:_____Title:_____

Signature:_____Date:_____

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT: This information is solicited under authority of Public Law 101-509. Furnishing the information on this form is voluntary, but failure to do so may result in disapproval of your request for a public transit fare benefit. The purpose of this information is to facilitate timely processing of your request, to ensure your eligibility, and to prevent misuse of the funds involved. This information will be matched with lists at other Federal agencies of Government-assigned parking to ensure consistency with mode of transportation checked.

C, F, and G Fund Monthly Returns
August 7, 2000

Months	C Fund	S&P 500 Stock Index	F Fund	Lehman Brothers U.S. Aggregate Bond Index	G Fund
1995 (Jan. - Dec.)	37.41%	37.58%	18.31%	18.47%	7.03%
1996 (Jan. - Dec.)	22.85%	22.96%	3.66%	3.63%	6.76%
1997 (Jan. - Dec.)	33.17%	33.36%	9.60%	9.65%	6.77%
1998 (Jan. - Dec.)	28.44%	28.58%	8.70%	8.69%	5.74%
1999 (Jan. - Dec.)	20.95%	21.04%	(0.85%)	(0.82%)	5.99%
1999	%	%	%	%	%
April	3.86	3.87	.29	.32	.46
May	(2.36)	(2.36)	(0.89)	(0.88)	.47
June	5.54	5.55	(0.33)	(0.32)	.49
July	(3.14)	(3.12)	(0.43)	(0.42)	.52
August	(0.50)	(0.50)	(0.05)	(0.05)	.53
September	(2.78)	(2.74)	1.15	1.16	.51
October	6.34	6.33	.38	.37	.53
November	2.00	2.03	(0.01)	(0.01)	.51
December	5.90	5.89	(0.45)	(0.48)	.54
2000					
January	(5.03)	(5.02)	(0.34)	(0.33)	.56
February	(1.93)	(1.89)	1.22	1.21	.53
March	9.74	9.78	1.32	1.32	.55
April	(2.98)	(3.01)	(0.29)	(0.29)	.52
May	(2.05)	(2.05)	(0.03)	(0.05)	.54
June	2.44	2.47	2.07	2.08	.53
July	(1.56)	(1.56)	0.89	0.91	.53
Last 12 Months *	8.85	8.98	6.00	5.97	6.56

Percentages in () are negative.

The C Fund is invested in the Barclays Equity Index Fund, which tracks the S&P 500 stock index. The F Fund is invested in the Barclays U.S. Debt Index Fund, which tracks the Lehman Brothers U.S. Aggregate bond index. The G Fund is invested in special issues of U.S. Treasury securities.